

D&G - CORE RULES

v1.0

General Principles

The most important rule: Whenever the rules are unclear use common sense and personal preference. Have fun!

GM & PCs: One player is going to take on the role of the Game Master (GM), creating a narrative for the game and controlling all Non-Player Characters (NPC), whilst the rest of the players act as Player Characters (PC), roleplaying, exploring and adventuring.

The Final Word: In order to keep things moving along quickly, the GM has the final ruling on anything that happens.

Preparation

The Session: Before each play session the GM should prepare the story that is going to be played out (see GM rules).

The Characters: Each player should prepare their character sheet before the session in order to keep track of their progression, items and other notes (see next page).

Playing the Game

The game is played in a sequence of steps during which the adventure plays out and the PCs get to take actions. Each step is played in order, and once all steps have been completed you go back to the start.

1. Story Time
2. Exploration
3. Events

1. Story Time

During the first step the GM describes the situation that the characters are in and the world that surrounds them, and may give hints as to what the PC's should do next.

Note that there is no interaction between the PC's during the Story Time step.

2. Exploration

In the Exploration step the PC's collectively decide where they want to go or what they want to do next. They may also take basic actions such as repairing equipment or treating to their wounds during this step.

Note that the GM may freely interrupt the Exploration step at any point, presenting the PC's with an event.

3. Events

Once the PC's have decided what they want to do, the GM describes what happens next and presents them with an Event. This could be anything from a simple interaction with someone or even a combat encounter.

When an event starts, all PC's must roll-off to determine a turn sequence, going from the player with highest result to lowest.

Starting with the first player, each PC must describe one action that they want to take, before play passes to the next PC. Once all PC's have taken their turn, the GM gets to take a turn controlling all other characters and events that are taking place, and then the round ends and the PC's go again.

Note that the GM may freely interrupt the PC's between their turns, presenting them with new challenges or updating them on different events that are taking place.

After all of the events and challenges have been overcome, the Events step is over.

PC Actions

During their turn PC's may describe one action that they want to take, and then the GM tells them what happens next.

Most actions are simple and require no dice rolling, however some actions that are more risky can lead to conflict resolution.

Note that PC's only get to describe their intention with actions, and not the actual result, as that is determined by the GM.

Conflict Resolution

Whenever a PC is attempting to do anything that either poses a challenge, or that might have a variety of results, then the conflict resolution rules are used.

The player must either pick one of the skills from their character sheet, or else describe a new skill that they wish to use to resolve the conflict at hand (which they may add to their character sheet if they wish).

Then the player may roll one die, plus as many dice as the mastery level of the skill that they are using, trying to score 4+.

The GM may also classify an action as being particularly easy, in which case the PC only needs to score 3+, or instead to be hard, in which case the PC needs to score 5+.

Other PC's that haven't already taken an action this round may skip their turn in order to help out. If they can convince the GM that they can help, then the active PC may add +1 die to their roll. PC's may also skip their turn in order to help other PC's that come after them in the round.

The situation will then change based on the amount of successes rolled:

Successes	Result
0	The action fails, and things get worse for the PC's.
1	The action succeeds, but with a small complication.
2	The action succeeds, with no further good or bad.
3+	The action succeeds, and with a bonus effect on top.

If you roll doubles and succeed, then you get a moment of insight, and you may ask the GM one yes or no question about the event, and the GM has to answer honestly.

If the action fails, then any of the PC's may sacrifice one appropriate item to negate the bad roll, counting as 1 success instead. If the PC's manage to convince the GM that the item can save them, then it is immediately removed from their character sheet.

Leveling Up

At the end of each session the GM must award the PC's with 1-3 XP each, based on how they performed:

- Showed up: 1 XP
- Overcame difficult challenges within their abilities: 2 XP
- Overcame difficult challenges beyond their abilities: 3 XP

If all of the players showed exceptional team work, you may award everyone with an additional +1 XP for it.

The players may then assign their XP toward any of their current skills, bringing them closer to a higher mastery level.

CHARACTER CREATION

Character Creation

Before the game can begin, each player must create a unique PC that they will play as, which needs to have all of the elements described below.

It's important that the players discuss their character with the GM before the session begins, making sure that all of the skills and equipment are usable as intended.

Name: The character's unique name.

Description: A short description of the character's background and personality.

Skills: Pick either two skills at Novice level, or one at Expert level. Each character may only ever have up to 10 skills, and if they have max. skills they must erase a skill to be able to add a new one. Note that these starting skills count as having as much XP already spent in them as would be required to bring them up to that level.

Equipment: Pick one weapon or magical item, plus up to three basic items that are being carried or worn. Each character may carry up to 5 items with them, unless they have a specific item that increases their carrying capacity to 10.

Late Joiners / One-Off Characters

It's entirely possible for players to join the campaign after a couple of sessions have already been played, or to have players that join only for one to two sessions.

These players simply create a character as usual, but are then awarded 2 XP for each session that they missed, which they can spend on any of their existing skills, or add new skills that they can spend them on.

The only limit to this is that new characters can't have any skills at a mastery level that is higher than the highest level of any skill from the other players.

Skills

Skills are the qualities and abilities that a character has, which help them overcome obstacles. Each skill has to have a unique use to deal with a specific type of situations, which is tested during conflict resolution.

Here are some example skills you can use:

Skill	Use
Sword Slash	Attacking with swords
Bow Training	Shooting bows
Long Jump	Jumping over obstacles
Enhanced Smell	Tracking animals
Bargaining	Haggling with merchants
Sprinting	Running quickly
Drinking	Out drinking challengers
Stalking	Sneaking quietly
Electric Bolt	Casting electrical magic
Arm Wrestling	Winning at arm wrestling

Each skill comes in three different mastery levels, which provide additional dice when resolving conflicts.

Mastery Level	Extra Dice
Novice	+1
Expert	+2
Master	+3

Skills start with no mastery level, and they go up in level depending on how much XP has been assigned to that skill:

Earned XP	Mastery Level
2 XP	Novice
6 XP	Expert
12 XP	Master

Once a skill has reached the Master level, you may erase it from your character sheet at the start of any session in order to give another skill 2 XP.

Equipment

Equipment is any items that characters can hold, wear or otherwise carry. Each item is used to help overcome challenges and it should have a clearly defined and specific use during conflict resolution. Note that in order to use certain skills, you are going to need an appropriate item.

Here are some example items you can use:

Item	Use
Sword	Close combat fighting
Spell Book	Casting spells
Bow	Shooting arrows
Royal Ring	Diplomatic immunity
Torch	Vision in the dark
Coins	Distracting enemies
Lute	Charming maidens
Grease	Making slippery ground
Mirror	Reflecting light
Backpack	Carrying extra equipment

Retirement

Once a character has reached the Expert level on at least 6 of its skills, or Master on at least 3 of its skills, then you may retire the character, turning it into an NPC.

The player then creates a new character and may choose for it to be a trainee of the retired character, starting with an additional skill from the retired character at the Novice mastery level.

CHARACTER SHEET

Name:	Picture:
Description & Notes:	

Skill:	Level:	XP:
Equipment:		

D&G - GM GUIDE

General Principles

The most important rule: Whenever the rules are unclear use common sense and personal preference. Have fun!

Being the GM: Being the Game Master (GM) is a challenging but rewarding task, as you will have to prepare all of the sessions, keep the game fun and engaging for the players, be knowledgeable on the game, and make rulings in situations with no right answers. This guide was created to help you with the preparation of your sessions, as well as how to use the rules to their full potential.

Player Emotions: Roleplaying games are a social experience, so as the GM it's your job to pay attention to everyone's emotions and make sure that everyone is enjoying themselves, so don't be afraid to bend the rules in order to keep players happy.

Preparation

Campaigns: Whilst you can play the game as a one-off session, it can also be interesting to string together multiple session into a campaign that follows a single story.

Sessions: Each session should ideally be made up of 3-5 events that provide the players with interesting stories, decisions and challenges to overcome. The length of each session is up to you, but we always recommend paying attention to how your players are feeling, and add or remove events to make sure that it's not cut off too early or overstays its welcome.

Fun for everyone: When preparing your sessions you should make sure that they have something interesting in them for all of your players. Whilst this means something different for each group, here are some general player motivation types that you might build your events around:

- Action / Excitement
- Social / Community
- Mastery / Strategy
- Immersion / Story
- Creativity / Discovery
- Achievement / Completion

Additionally you should make sure that there are interesting things to do for each of the player's skills and equipment, so that they all have something to do, and there are is no single player that can tackle all events, or that can't tackle any of them.

Player Choice: It's also a good idea that you prepare multiple storylines for your session, and then let the players decide which one to follow, which will make them feel more invested in what happens.

Don't Overprepare: Finally, it's best not to prepare every little detail of your session, but instead keep things simple with a basic outline, and then adapt what happens based on player choice.

Playing the Game

Session Flow: Whilst the core rules describe a strict succession of play steps, in practice these steps just encode how a natural game flows, and can be played out of order or even ignored if it works better for you.

Player Intentions: It's very important that whenever players want to take an action, they describe their intention, and the GM takes over from these. This might be just a simple description of what happens next, or asking for a conflict resolution roll, but it must be decided by the GM in order to stay in control of the session's flow.

Balancing Fun: During your session try to pay attention to how well things are going for the players, and control the flow of the game accordingly. If the players have been having a lot of bad moments, ease things up and give them a hand, or if they have been breezing through the session, then up the challenge and give them bigger obstacles.

Counter Repetition: If you see that players are always using the same strategies over and over again, throw new situations at them which can't be resolved the same way and keep them on their toes.

Ending Sessions: Once you feel that your players are reaching the end of the session, we recommend presenting the players with one last small interaction, such as meeting a new character or finding some loot, so that they can slowly unwind before it's over.

Awarding XP: Don't be stingy with giving players XP, a normal session should always end with players earning 2-3 XP each, which usually means they will get to upgrade their mastery of one of their skills.

Conflict Resolution

Simple Actions: When players take a simple action that's not risky, keep things fast and don't make them roll for it, simply say what happens next and move on with the session.

Empowerment: In order to keep everyone engaged, conflict resolution was designed with only player rolls in mind. This means that NPC's don't roll to see if their actions succeed, but instead it's the PC's that roll to see if they can avoid the NPC actions or stop them from succeeding.

Basic Skills: Since players have a limited amount of skills, most actions they try will be without a mastery level. This means that most rolls have a 50% chance to pass/fail, so you can use the easy/hard action system to adjust the difficulty. A simple way to not discourage players is to make actions easier after the first try, or even turn it into an automatic success after a couple of tries.

Power Values: When dealing with NPC's or challenge that require more effort to beat, you can assign them a total number of successes needed to complete. Whilst there is no official list of power values, you can use the following as a rough guideline:

- 1 = Basic / Easy
- 2 = Average / Fair
- 3 = Rough / Challenging
- 4 = Brutal / Very Hard

Consequences: If players take actions that fail, or don't manage to avoid NPC actions, then they should suffer a small narrative setback, but if they keep failing, then it should become a more significant setback, like skipping a turn or losing an item.

Player Death: Whenever a player is about to take an action that could be deadly, that should be made very clear to them before they roll. If they take the action and fail, you should give them a significant setback and a warning. If they keep trying despite multiple warnings and fail, then you can incapacitate them, and they won't be able to take any actions until they have been stabilized by another player. This should be done on a timer, and if the time runs out you can finally kill the character. Alternatively you can also have them be captured instead, so that the rest of the players can go on a * rescue mission to save them.

ADDITIONAL RULES

GM Tools

NPC Disposition: If the players come across an NPC whose disposition is not clear, then you can roll one die to see their reaction:

Roll	Disposition
1	Hostile - Will attempt to hinder, harass or attack the players.
2-3	Wary - Will be unhelpful unless given significant motivation.
4-5	Friendly - Will be helpful as long as it doesn't inconvenience them.
6	Helpful - Will help the players even if it's inconvenient for them.

NPC Morale: It's rare that NPC's will fight to the death, so if they lose half of their group, lose their leader, are badly wounded, or are otherwise faced with a terrifying situation, then they must take a morale test. Roll one die, and on a 4+ they surrender or run away. If the NPC is weak or fearful, then the target is a 3+, and if they are elite or deranged, then the target is a 5+ instead.

Timers: In order to keep players engaged and avoid sessions from stalling, you can put a timer on your events. This means that the players have a set amount of turns, rounds, hours, days, etc. before something happens. The timer value can be set by the GM or can be rolled for randomly, and we recommend that it's openly known to the players. If the timer measures something that needs to be done by the players, then its value should be fair and achievable. To raise engagement with the timer, you can also give players the chance to complete challenges or use items that can slow it down, giving them some breathing room. Note that if you notice that your players find timers to be too stressful, then you should probably avoid using them.

Distances: When playing the game it's best not to give players distance measurements which are very specific, so that they can be free to imagine environments whatever way they think are most interesting. If you do need to give them distances however, then we recommend keeping things abstract, and you can use this as a guideline:

- Close - Within arm's reach
- Near - A couple steps away
- Far - A short run away
- Very Far - Out of range

Loot & Equipment

Use Frequently: Items are a great way to give players more ways to interact with the game world, and to come up with new and creative ways to beat challenges. In order to encourage players to use their items, give them examples of how items can be used when they find them, and make sure that they have a significant impact when used. We also recommend that frequently used items are eventually consumed, lost or even destroyed, and then players be provided with new items to be creative with.

Finding Loot: Whilst it's important that players are presented with different items to interact with, loot should still feel like something special when found. If the players search everything in the world, it's unlikely that they'll stumble on something interesting all the time, so pace out when and how loot is given. In any case, it's good to give players some loot at the end of each session as a small reward, and also to give them something new to try next session.

Single-Use Items: An easy way to make sure that players cycle through items often is to make them single-use, removing them after the player has used them once. These items should have a notable effect when used, so that players feel like it's worth it even if the item is going to be removed afterwards.

Recharging Items: You can also encourage players to use different items by making some of them require a set amount of time to recharge before they can be used again. This could take a couple of rounds, hours, days, etc. and should be stated clearly.

Trade-Offs: When introducing items that are especially powerful, it can be interesting to give them both positive and negative aspects, so that players have to accept a trade-off if they want to use them.

Encumbrance: Generally speaking the characters can carry up to 5 items, which can be increased to 10 with backpacks or similar. Whilst we don't specify weights for items, you should use your best judgement to determine what players can reasonably carry on them or in their backpacks.

Money: The game doesn't define any values for items, and we encourage keeping things abstract, relying on trading, bartering or other means of exchanging goods instead.

Using Miniatures

Abstraction: When playing with miniatures it's important to understand that they are just used as a rough visual representation of where characters and objects are placed in relation with each other. This means that not everything from the story has to be shown on the table, and both players and GM have the freedom to keep coming up with new ways to interact with the world.

Play Area: We recommend using a small space between 1'x1' and 2'x2' in size.

Terrain: When setting up the table make sure to place a couple of large pieces of terrain and lots of smaller pieces that can be used to hide behind or use as cover.

Interactables: To encourage players to not just focus on the NPC's on the table, try to set up as many interactable objects on the table as possible, such as doors that can be opened, bridges that can be lowered, or rocks that can be dropped on enemies.

Player Actions: When it's a player's turn to take an action, they can either stay in place or move by up to 6", and then may interact with something that's within 1". Else they may move by up to 12", but not interact with anything. Generally speaking, shooting attacks should have a range of 6" to 12".

NPC Actions: When it's the NPC's turn to take actions, they follow the same rules for moving and interacting as players. It's also usually better to have the NPC's spread out across the table, encouraging players to move around. Note that you can also make NPC's conveniently stand near hazards to give players a chance to exploit them.

Living Table: Using miniatures should be an exciting way to keep players engaged, so try to avoid making things static. Keep it fresh by changing things up mid-game, adding new NPC's, destroying the environment, revealing hidden objects, and generally giving players a sense that everything that is on the table could change at any moment.